Reviews

Christopher Lee, *City Bushman: Henry Lawson and the Australian Imagination.* Fremantle, WA: Curtin University Books, 2005, 272 pp. AU$29.95
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Henry Lawson is, indubitably, an iconic figure in Australian literary and cultural history, and Chris LeChristopher Lee's *City Bushman* is a study of how that status was achieved and posthumously developed. While attention is paid to his literary reputation, and to the careful study and analysis of various statues and festivals produced in Lawson's honour, the real interest of this book is in analysing the power relations and cultural transactions implicit in the public uses of Lawson.

The opening chapter is most closely concerned with Lawson's career as a real, live writer. While it may not quite satisfy the scholarly historian of the 1890s looking for unturned stones or a more detailed contextualising of Lawson in his period, this opening section gives a succinct and insightful trajectory of Lawson's work, with a focus on the construction of identity or image through the strategic choices of contents and titles in his various books. Lee reminds us how, in reviewing Lawson's first book of verse, A. G. Stephens articulated a binary opposition between cosmopolitan and nationalist elements that would continue to influence Lawson's reputation for decades. While Lawson attempted to repudiate the judgments of "Cultured Critics" in order to assert the value of authentic working-class writing, it is made clear that he was to a large extent "walled in" by his material conditions:

> As a poorly educated working-class colonial writer of popular verse and short stories, his claims upon a literary reputation were precarious. . . . Popularity with the more middle-class audiences who could afford the prices of his books seemed to demand violation of his political and aesthetic principles. (35)

This interpretation is used to explain why Lawson's first collections of verse and short stories omitted most of his radical poetry and emphasised the persona of the

bush writer—an emphasis that would become even stronger when he aimed for an international English-speaking market. It is well known that Lawson became increasingly frustrated with what he perceived to be a lack of recognition and reward for his work. Like many other Australian-born cultural workers (writers, artists, singers) he took ship for London, with more success than most. Despite his success as a writer of fiction and poetry, however, he could not manage to sell himself as a literary essayist, a move which could have consolidated his claims to literary credibility. Family and personal dramas, with his wife Bertha being admitted to an asylum, meant that Lawson's London career was cut short. But Lee is not particularly interested in the biographical details. His main point is that Lawson's ambition to be recognised as "an authentic, Australian working-class *artist*" was to remain an impossible dream, at least during his own lifetime (39).

After his death, however, Lawson's literary (and personal) failure "was not going to stand in the way of his being mythologized as an archetypal Australian" (41). For the remainder of the book, with its discussions of Lawson's State funeral, the fund-raising for and construction of memorials, his significance to Frank Hardy and the Communist Party of Australia, and the adoption of Lawson festivals by regional authorities in the interests of community-building and tourism, the focus is on the political and social rather than the literary uses of Lawson.

In cultural studies, a banknote may be as readable as a poem. It is probably just as well for the main project of Lee's book that he doesn't spend *too* much time analysing the image of Henry Lawson on the Australian $10 note introduced in 1966, but that he does deal with its history and significance. Through both text and illustrations, he traces the provenance of the images in the design (the Holtermann collection of photographs of Gulgong from the 1870s, Guy Warren's adaptation of a Lionel Lindsay etching of Lawson), and notes its significance for the civic prestige of Gulgong. With some colour photographs and plentiful black and white illustrations supported by detailed explanatory captions, the book is well illustrated throughout.

In his account of various posthumous celebrations and the controversies associated with them, Lee has selectively used the work of previous biographers. His summary of the correspondence between public officials, family and friends of Lawson before and after his State funeral, for instance, is detailed, but more clearly focused than the comprehensive account in Colin Roderick's *Henry Lawson: A Life*. At the same time, it gives a dispassionate account of how Lawson's image was useful to Prime Minister Billy Hughes as a symbol of Australianness which reinforced his own claims as a man of working-class origins to a share in the glory of the bushman/digger mythology (51).

Such political opportunism did not go unremarked at the time, or in subsequent accounts. Like Roderick, Lee makes full use of J. T. Lang's pithy and much-quoted comment that "[t]hey buried Harry like a lord. . . . A week before they would have dodged by on the other side to avoid him. Now they wanted to bathe in his reflected glory" (45). Roderick's biography ends with a few lines of verse in which Lawson seems to ask for a big public send-off (making Lang's criticism look like cynicism):

> I wish for no snivelling about me
> (My work was the work of the land),
> But I hope that my country will shout me
> The price of a decent brass band. (qtd. in Roderick 401)

Lee's chapter, by contrast, ends with an argument that "Lawson's reputation was rendered multiple in form by the occasion of his funeral," and that the struggle over his funeral was just part of "what was to be a continuing struggle for the name and reputation of Henry Lawson" (67). Writing about "the memorial movement bandwagon," Lee argues that Lawson could simultaneously represent socialist ideals to the union movement, "an imperially loyal form of national patriotism" to the teaching establishment, and a lost bohemian way of life to his mates (70–80). These themes are developed in the rest of the book, with particular attention to the way in which he could stand for a conservative nostalgia for the pioneering past as well as the more radical version of the Australian bushman whose nomadic and marginal social position constituted a challenge to, and a critique of, capitalism

Despite his cooption by establishment and commercial interests, Lawson's following among socialist and other left-wing groups is shown to have been considerable throughout the twentieth century. Lee focuses specifically on Frank Hardy's work on Lawson in the context of the Communist Party of Australia's changing stances on literature and its relation to the radical tradition. He offers an intriguing discussion of Hardy's play about Lawson, with its Brechtian acknowledgement of the constructedness of theatre and its self-reflexive invitation to consider Hardy's own relationship to the writer.

In a further twist on the multiple uses of the Lawson theme, Lee argues that the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) used Lawson to affirm its Stalinist Marxist doctrine "by citing him as an example of the failure of left reformism" (120). At the same time, however, the ALP was establishing the Henry Lawson Labor College in Sydney to train young people for careers in the union movement and/or Labor politics. Again, controversy over the naming of the college provided an opportunity for scrutiny of Lawson's significance (arguments about how "sound" he was as a socialist thinker, whether he could legitimately be used by the union movement he

had criticised). It becomes clear that what mattered in 1945 to the founders of the college is not what Lawson himself had thought or written, but how he affected others, or what he meant to any given version of Australian cultural history.

The way in which this book emphasises the social as well as the symbolic functions of Lawson and his work through the second half of the twentieth century is part of a contemporary revision of the long-standing opposition in Australian literary studies between radical nationalism and conservative internationalism, a topic that Lee has explored more fully elsewhere in articles and chapters with pithy titles like "The University versus the People in the Case of Henry Lawson." Insofar as Lee's argument is rooted in detailed analyses of debates from the 1950s and 1960s, it provides a valuable account of Australian literary history, but it seems odd, even in historical terms, to characterise academics as a group with apparently less diversity of opinion than that which Lee shows to have existed within the ranks of the CPA. As a broad generalisation, however, the binary opposition helps to organize the discussion of Lawson's posthumous career, and the resistance of the Lawson legend to any formal process of canonisation.

Under the heading "Lawson Goes to University," Lee examines Lawson's treatment by a number of mid-twentieth-century more-or-less academic critics. He offers an interesting argument that, through a series of exchanges in the pages of literary magazines, A. A. Philips was seduced by Harry Heseltine into reading Lawson more as a tortured soul, less as a writer representing a community (155–59). Heseltine's influence, of course, could have been reinforced by the contradictoriness of Lawson himself—an apostle of mateship who could be slow to acknowledge the influence of his mates, a writer for the people who was querulous and insecure about being appreciated sufficiently, an Australian nationalist who felt he had to leave Australia to be properly valued.

Drawing on the work of David Carter, Tim Rowse, and Leigh Dale, Lee offers a succinct and persuasive reading of Lawson criticism between the early 1960s and mid 1970s. This includes a suggestive case study of Stephen Murray-Smith's revisions to his book on Lawson, carried out in dialogue with the more conservative academic editor of Oxford University Press's Australian Writers and their Work Series, Graeme Johnston. Lee is part of the recent generation of Australian scholars who are interested in delineating the history of Australian culture and criticism, a context in which Lawson's life extends well beyond his death.

Sidelining such issues as cosmopolitan literary value, which he nonetheless regarded as lacking in Lawson's work, A. G. Stephens famously penned a potent marketing slogan when he wrote, "Henry Lawson is the voice of the bush, and the

bush is the heart of Australia." Already nostalgic in 1895, this characterization of Lawson as a national writer anticipates the way in which he would come to represent a constellation of values and attitudes which were by no means unique to, or consistently maintained throughout, his work but which belong more generally to the 1890s Legend of the Bush.

The appropriation of Australia's pioneering heritage and the construction of the Bush as the site of a distinctive Australian identity by largely urban writers and audiences, from the 1890s and later, is well known. It is not surprising, then, to find that the very first Lawson Society was founded in Footscray, by Steve Ford, and closely linked with both the Australian Native Association and the Australian Labour Party. Other local uses of celebrity examined by Lee in the final chapters of this book include the nostalgic celebrations of the mid-twentieth century in so-called Lawson Country, festivals in Grenfell and Mudgee which align him with both the itinerant bushman and selector/yeoman ideals.

In his recent history of Australian short fiction, Bruce Bennett comments that it is unfair to expect a single writer to bear the weight of significance that Henry Lawson does as national icon, particularly if his iconic status is expected to hold up as a representation of the literature of the 1890s. Earlier generations of critics struggled with this issue of Lawson's significance, torn between the values of high and popular literary culture. Chris Lee takes a different angle on Lawson, focusing on the iconic status rather than the writerly achievement. This book looks outward from Lawson's literary context and reputation to the marketplace and the political forum, to the civic life of individual towns and the imaginary civic identity of the nation.

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Ghassan Hage, *Against Paranoid Nationalism: Searching for Hope in a Shrinking Society*. Annandale, Vic.: Pluto Press, 2003, 174 pp. AU$19.95
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Inevitably, John Howard's commitment to George Bush's "war on terror" is deeply connected to a number of issues related to the way in which Australia imagines itself. The Australian imaginary is caught up in a complex dialectic in relation to race, ethnicity and culture, and the changes in this dialectic in the last few decades help to indicate the extent to which Australian identities are fraught with ambiguities and insecurities. Ghassan Hage discusses these issues, and others related to them, in his latest book *Against Paranoid Nationalism: Searching for Hope in a Shrinking Society*, which explores the development of a (perhaps historically unique) form of racism and nationalism, largely concomitant with global, postmodern capitalism. In his previous book, *White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society* (1998), Hage analysed some of the idiosyncratic features of contemporary racism in a "colonial" nation like Australia, and the ways in which the multicultural policies of the second part of the twentieth century simultaneously rejected and engaged with what might be considered the political unconscious of the Australian psyche. These ideas are developed further in *Against Paranoid Nationalism*, with a stronger focus on how notions of racial and cultural identity in Australia have been influenced or represented through the so-called history wars, the reactions to and consequences of September 11, and (what is often seen as the apotheosis of the Howard government's position on race) the Tampa crisis. Furthermore, Hage uses both scholarly and anecdotal evidence from his own experience as a Lebanese Australian to illustrate some of his points in relation to how race has come to be constructed in Australian society, and how it is now used as a political tool by both major political parties.

One of the most suggestive aspects of Hage's discussion of paranoid nationalism is his explanation of it as being produced by and through global, postmodern capitalism. He introduces this analysis by discussing societies in general as "mechanisms for the distribution of hope" (3), according to which there is an inherent conflict between the "caring" aspects of any given society (its symbolically maternal role to provide subjects with the safety and care they crave) and the "defensive" aspects of that society (the symbolically paternal role to defend borders, punish crime and so forth). Thus, what Hage calls "defensive nationalism" is simply the historically produced reaction to outside threats: in a society at war, for example, individuals are understandably prone to nationalism. This form of nationalism is fundamentally different from contemporary, paranoid nationalism, which stems from the insecurities produced by neo-liberal economies that have

abandoned their maternal role to care for citizens. In such economies, governments have prioritised the creation of a "touristic aesthetics" (19) in local regions or nations, catering largely, if not exclusively, to the managerial middle class of global capitalism. So, newly marginalised working- and middle-class subjects struggle to come to terms with this modern and unexpected rejection: "They project the fear that is inherent in the fragility of their relationship with their own nation onto everything classified as alien" (21). This consideration of the Australian paranoid nationalist as the victim of neo-liberal economics helps to open up a more fruitful debate about the causes of racism than the common left-wing/liberal view of nationalists as simply bigoted simpletons.

In addition to the characterisation of paranoid nationalism as a symptom of contemporary capitalism, Hage also provides a psychoanalytic platform of analysis in order to discuss the causes and functions of nationalism. He considers racist paranoia to be "the manifestation of the national subject's relation to the motherland, the subliminal fear that 'she' is going to abandon us" (30). Paranoid nationalism is also linked to the concept of "avoidance"—refusing to accept that the mother(land) has rejected the subject:

> [A]gainst the reality of a non-nurturing motherland the avoidant nationalist develops an attachment to an ideal motherland s/he hopes will eventuate in the future. . . . The national subject develops a pathological narcissism as s/he becomes unable to cope with the view of the other, as it risks puncturing his or her increasingly hollow "hoped-for-motherland." (43)

This nationalist paranoia and narcissism are partly exacerbated in Australia by the guilt of colonial theft, the history of which is still being debated fiercely from two opposing political positions. Hage's brief discussion of how Freud's concept of "the uncanny" can be used for an analysis of the presence of colonial theft in the popular unconscious of White Australian culture brings to mind the work of poets like Judith Wright, who once wrote that, as descendants of European colonisers, we "are ruined by the thing we kill."

As well as discussing the issue of Australian nationalism from the perspectives of economics and desire, Hage also illustrates his view of how the ideology of nationalism and racism informs the public response to Palestinian suicide bombers responding to colonial, Israeli violence. The general outcry against any academic or intellectual who does not preface a discussion of suicide bombers by "absolutely condemning" them indicates a deeply ideological view of reality, Hage argues. Explanations or explorations of the specific historical context that produces suicide bombers are generally swept aside, in favour of essentialist views of the "fundamentalist" mind that "hates our freedom," and so forth. This refusal to con-

sider social explanations demonstrates the inherently subversive nature of such explanations in a highly prescriptive and politicised intellectual climate: "Social explanation is driven by an inclusionary rather than exclusionary ethics, and as such it embodies the negation of the logic of war and becomes itself perceived as a political threat in times of war" (141). This is, of course, obvious in George Bush's public statements, constantly reinforcing a view of Middle Eastern subjects as either heroic fans of US imperial "democracy" or cowardly followers of Islamic fundamentalism, but it also informs debates about crime, for example, in Australian media. Hence, social explanations of what produces crime are frequently condemned for not showing sufficient consideration of the feelings of those affected by crime.

Ultimately, Hage's analysis is strongest in its discussion of how the Howard government and its followers have exploited the fear produced by the neo-liberal demolition of the social democratic welfare state, and how the paranoid nationalism that has followed accordingly provides an emotional as well as intellectual cul-de-sac. Although Hage's perspective on the welfare state seems somewhat Utopian at times—a consideration of Foucault's critique of the modern welfare state is largely absent from this discussion—his analysis of the causes of racism opens up the possibility of a new and greatly improved debate about the future of multiculturalism in Australia. As Hage demonstrates in his analysis, there has been a shift in the conceptualisation of multiculturalism from a practical policy on how to deal with the influx of workers from non-White cultures, to a middle-class lifestyle that is an essential ideological component of capitalism. In this manner, Hage comes close to Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, who argue that "the topography of power no longer has to do primarily with spatial relations but is inscribed, rather, in the temporal displacements of subjectivities" (319). In other words, the fluctuating "non-space" of postmodern capitalism prioritises the interests of multinational corporations, and as Hage demonstrates, these corporations prefer a specifically *petit-bourgeois* version of a comfortable multiculturalism, which achieves little in the way of genuinely meaningful solutions. Instead, his analysis implies that the solution to the problem of paranoid nationalism would need to include a future Australian society which does not consistently generate the sort of pathological anxiety on which racism and nationalism feed.

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ISBN: not yet available

Frank Kermode, always one for a profound truth disguised as plain common sense, suggested in a 2001 lecture that canonical texts remain canonical because they give people pleasure (15). One of the many excellent things about Frank Molloy's "life" of Victor Daley, the Irish-Australian "bohemian" poet of the late nineteenth century, is the force and clarity with which it focuses on this simple fact: that Daley's poetry—and especially his lyric poetry—once gave Australian readers enormous pleasure. This was true for people of his own generation, and it continued to be true for at least one more generation of readers as well. We know it for a fact because many people said so (not just at his funeral), often with enough specificity to convey the *kind* of pleasure his poems gave them, and even which poems. It was only in the 1930s that his reputation as Australia's best lyric poet started to succumb to depreciation by H. M. Green, Douglas Stewart and Vincent Buckley, and to be displaced by the likes of Shaw Neilson and Judith Wright.

Victor Daley (1858–1905) is best known to recent generations of Australian literature students by the handful of poems anthologised in turn by Leon Cantrell, Rodney Hall, Philip Neilsen and Chris Lee, satiric attacks on the arrogance of the rich, the pomposity of Empire, and the absurdity of its colonial hangers-on. Most of these poems—"Correggio Jones" and "A Treat for the London Poor," for example—were first published in newspapers and magazines under Daley's Gaelic pen-name "Creeve Roe" and not collected until the 1940s by Muir Holburn and Marjorie Pizer. They still work magnificently. Comparable with the radical poems of his younger contemporary at the *Bulletin*, Henry Lawson, they are angrier, cleverer and funnier than Lawson's. (For years I paraded the last stanza of "A Treat for the London Poor" before students as the best and funniest piece of anti-imperialist satire around.)

But Daley was celebrated in his own lifetime as a poet of the lyric, and he himself, on Molloy's evidence, valued his topical satires less highly—and tossed them off more easily—than the richly pictorial and "pathetic" poems that he laboured over at length, and which found their way (at least the shorter ones) into the pre-War anthologies of Serle, Murdoch and the Mackanesses. One of the few survivors into the post-War anthologies (significantly, no doubt, a "meta-lyric," but still a very beautiful set of words) was "Dreams," a modified *villanelle*, of which this is the first stanza:

I have been dreaming all a summer day
Of rare and dainty poems I would write;
Love-lyrics delicate as lilac-scent,
Soft idylls woven of wind, and flower, and stream,
And songs and sonnets carven in fine gold. (Serle 96)

Sensuous richness of this kind, language drenched in colour and music, reached its high point in Daley's long dreamlike poem "A Sunset Fantasy," first published by the *Bulletin* in January 1888. His other long poem for the year, "The Old Wife and the New," published two months earlier, did for his readers' emotions what "A Sunset Fantasy" did for their senses: it orchestrated and intensified them almost beyond endurance. The poem is a pathetic reminiscence in which an old pioneer remembers and mourns the wife, now long dead, with whom he shared his early struggles, even as he watches, with love, the young wife who is sharing his declining years (and who knows what he's thinking and feeling). J. F. Archibald said of his reaction to the first poem, "I walked on, or rather flew through air, as if I had imbibed ounces of ether." Randolph Bedford "bowed down and worshipped"; Zora Cross was spellbound. Reactions to the second poem were equally rhapsodic: "Is there anything more melodious in the language?" (Ina Wildman); "Daley in his finest mood writing to a million hearts" (Will Ogilvie). Both poems were great favourites with professional reciters in Australia and New Zealand (Molloy 66).

One of the useful things about good literary biographies is that they naturally tend to treat the phases of a writer's life-work as complex moments in their own right, configuring inheritance and aspiration, production and reception, self and society, in a series of changing but connected ways. Molloy's book exploits that capacity of the genre very effectively, and is able to do so partly because his "life" of Daley rests on an unusually solid bibliographic foundation; he has previously published, with Mulini Press, a comprehensive bibliography of Daley's large and scattered *oeuvre*. One welcome effect of this is his generous quotation and citation of Daley's poems—generous but remarkably unobtrusive: ninety poems are referenced in the index, but the text certainly doesn't read like a series of commentaries. When Molloy pauses to comment on specific poems he makes it count; and the narrative is organised, appropriately, not by the poetry alone—for Daley's serious Muse absconded with alarming frequency, staying away on one occasion for nearly ten years—but also by his journalistic writing and by the succession of social and institutional milieux of which that writing was a part.

Born James Daley ("Victor" was added much later) near Armagh in the north of Ireland, he moved to England with his family, then returned to Ireland, then back again to Plymouth for clerical work. From there, at the age of twenty, he took passage to Australia. Here he resumed the peripatetic life, moving from Syd-

ney to Adelaide (where he published his first poem), thence to Melbourne (where he got his first reporting job, on the *Carlton Advertiser*), to Queanbeyan (where he bought and edited a local newspaper), and back to Sydney, where he began to get regular freelance work, first with the Irish Catholic newspaper *The Freeman's Journal*, then with Archibald's newly-established *Bulletin*. A few years later he moved back to Melbourne where he contributed articles, and some poems, to *Table Talk* and the Melbourne *Punch*, then back yet again to Sydney, to the *Bulletin* and the *Lone Hand*.

Daley's wandering existence was only in part a function of itchy feet. More important was a constant need for employment, of a kind he could tolerate—and that meant journalism. By the end of the 1880s he had a wife and two children, with two more to come in the next few years—a substantial financial commitment. He also had a serious drinking problem and was in the early stages of the consumptive illness which would eventually take him off at the age of 47.

All of this sounds familiarly Bohemian. In fact, the classic Bohemian models—modified, as Molloy points out, by the misogyny of the native culture—were deeply formative of Daley's attitudes and lifestyle. He had imbibed Henri Murger's Parisian version of "la vie bohémienne," and was inducted into its Sydney variant in the early 1880s by Harold Grey (Theodore Emile Argles), an older *Bulletin* writer with an authentic French connection, a taste for absinthe, a pink suit, and a suppressed wife at home. The "Bohemians of the *Bulletin,*" as Norman Lindsay later called them, were rather more interested in colonial politics than their more "Aesthete" French counterparts, and Grey's facility for clever topical verse satire was the equal of Daley's. The pair of them collaborated brilliantly on the *Bulletin's* "Pepper and Salt" column in its early years.

Bohemianism is a strangely persistent element in Australia's cultural history, and anyone attempting a biography of a writer or artist, especially male and Sydney-based, between the 1880s and the 1950s, is likely to find that their subject lived in some conscious relation to it, which calls for analysis. But writing about Bohemianism successfully—by which I mean both "responsibly," and also "comfortably" for all concerned—is quite difficult in the current climate, and I think Molloy manages it pretty well. The problem is partly political: one wants to acknowledge the genuinely emancipatory force of Bohemian ideals and refusals within particular historical conjunctures (attacks on "philistinism," for example, look different in the 1880s and the 1950s), while at the same time registering (again, in historically differentiated ways) the deeply reactionary political and ideological elements in many Bohemian cultures, for example in relation to women, marriage and sexuality.

What this often comes down to, for biography, is a problem of stance. How do biographers situate themselves *vis-à-vis* their often boozy, feckless and misogynous subjects? Do they go along for the full Bohemian ride, in the interests of maintaining an unbroken empathy with the subject, but at the cost of an ethically and politically impoverished understanding of the larger phenomenon? Do they withdraw themselves to a safe distance and pronounce pious anathemas in the hope that the reader's interest in the subject will survive, even if empathy is lost? Do they adopt a tone of wry tolerance, placing an ironic space between biographer and subject, and merely attenuating rather than severing completely, the bond of sympathetic identification? Or do they simply remain neutral (a stance which is, for all practical purposes, impossible)?

Molloy's rendering of Daley's Bohemian lifestyle is mainly a mix of the first and third stances, but it sometimes veers closer to the second stance than, say, Peter Kirkpatrick tends to do in his studies of Sydney's café Bohemia in the1920s. There are moments when Molloy tells us, in no uncertain terms, that he disapproves of Daley's cavalier and thoughtless treatment of his wife and family, of some of his friends, and of his own health. But there is a particular appropriateness about those occasional moments of judgment, because they express not so much the biographer's disapproval as the subject's own. Molloy has taken his cue for analysis and censure from Daley's own explicit dramatisation of his life as an ongoing conflict between "Victor," the free spirit and poet with an assumed name, and "Jim," the former accountant's clerk and family man with a mortgage and the name he was born with. To make the point more generally, Daley wrote enough passages of autobiographical introspection and self-recrimination to provide Molloy with a framework for psychological analysis that carries conviction because, while it may be more elaborated and contextualised than Daley's own reflections, it extends and organises them, rather than constructing or importing a transcendent theoretical framework.

Molloy's decision to examine Victor Daley very much in Victor Daley's own terms offers some real purchase on a puzzle that comes to the fore in Norman Lindsay's *Bohemians of the Bulletin*, where Daley, the epitome of the free spirit, is paradoxically remembered for his prudish respectability (Lindsay 45). It also helps to illuminate the question of Daley's "Irishness." The book opens with a passage of delightfully vague Celtic atmospherics Daley sent to A. G. Stephens in 1898 in response to a request for some biographical details. It may have been the first time Daley ever really thought about his Irishness. Before that time, as Molloy's excellent chapter on "Daley and the Celtic Movement" shows, he knew very little about Irish cultural traditions. He never took any interest in Irish politics or visiting politicians, being a thoroughgoing assimilationist who "resisted any en-

closure in an Irish or Irish-Australian enclave" (124). But during the last few years of his life he rapidly developed an interest in the Celtic Revival, and contemporaries such as E. J. Brady and Roderic Quinn celebrated his exemplary Irishness, even rereading much of the earlier (mainly "Swinburnian") verse as thoroughly Celtic in spirit—as perhaps, in a sense, it was.

At just over 150 pages of text, this is a short biography, but it is consistently readable, richly illustrated and meticulously documented. Above all, it is a biography that serves a genuine need: Daley was an undeniably major literary figure, widely perceived at the time as the natural successor to Kendall and Brunton Stephens, and—with his *Bulletin* association—something of a "bridge" from them to Lawson and Paterson. Perhaps because, justly or not, most of his poetry has not remained popular, there has been no full biography of him until now, and, as George Mackaness and Walter Stone agreed fifty years ago, one was "long overdue." It is bound to generate further work on a richly talented and interesting figure.

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Allaine Cerwonka, *Native to the Nation: Disciplining Landscapes and Bodies in Australia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004, 280 pp.
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The study of spatial practices is an undertaking that draws upon a number of theoretical approaches. In *Native to the Nation*, Allaine Cerwonka certainly surveys her subject area from many directions. She employs the tools of history, geography, sociology, political science, ethnography, post-structuralism and post-colonialism in her analysis of the disciplining of landscapes and bodies in Australia. She shows, through ethnographic accounts of four separate Melbourne "sites," how settler Australians "redefine and legitimate their claim to the land" (5), especially in response

to the problematic (in terms of those claims) presence of non-white migrants and Aborigines, with their unique entitlement to the land. These renegotiations were also prompted, she suggests, by Australia's proximity to Asia and national overtures towards republicanism. "Local spatial practices," she demonstrates, "are connected to 'elsewhere'" and are implicated in the production of national and racial identities. Cerwonka's analysis focuses upon cottage gardens in East Melbourne, the native garden movement, the policing of Aboriginal people in inner city Fitzroy, and the international context of police attitudes to Asian migrants in that same suburb (5). The overarching intention to "explore how nations are imagined through non-narrative spatial practices" holds together this somewhat sprawling list of subjects admirably, though its grip at times seems a little tenuous (6).

In a chapter evocatively entitled "A Picturesque Nation for a 'Barren' Continent," Cerwonka argues persuasively that the cultivation of cottage gardens, and the renovation of nineteenth-century workers' cottages, by the residents of the (imagined) village of East Melbourne work to reassert a British heritage and identity in contemporary, multicultural Melbourne. The idea of the picturesque is central to her argument, and she prefaces her analysis with a thorough account of the colonial imposition of notions of the picturesque onto the Australian landscape. While this discussion is both informative and pertinent, her analysis works more successfully when applied to the microcosm of actual East Melbourne cottage gardens (and gardeners). Like these gardens themselves, it seems to benefit from containment within a smaller space, with visible and enforceable boundaries. Her account of the colonial picturesque is limited by its insistence on the theory that early settler gardens were "homesick gardens," which sought to reproduce miniature British landscapes in Australian soil. While this was undoubtedly one of the functions of white colonial gardens in Australia, the argument is applied so assiduously that it doesn't allow for more complex readings of the ways in which a garden can mediate the divide between homesickness and belonging. Like the later gardeners in East Melbourne, individual settler gardeners did plant native plants in these so-called "homesick gardens"—which suggests that a more subtle process of accommodation and transformation was taking place alongside the horticultural performance of nostalgia. Katie Holmes' discussion of Gertrude Bell's "Coochin Coochin" garden in southern Queensland highlights the dialogue between past and present landscapes that is always taking place in the creation of a garden (155–58).

Cerwonka's account of the West Australian pioneer Georgiana Molloy (which is, problematically, heavily dependent on the William Lines biography) does address the native gardening carried out by this colonial gardener, but it is presented as entirely a product of Molloy's later life in the colony, as if tending a nostalgic garden and planting native species are mutually exclusive activities. Cerwonka divides her

discussion of Molloy into two distinct halves—the first of which positions her as a "homesick gardener" and the next (in the native gardening section) as a converted native gardener. Susan K. Martin's article on Molloy's gardening reveals a gardener whose growing appreciation of Australian plants was embedded in her own garden, alongside the plants of memory, throughout her life in the colony. Surely the point is that Molloy was, in fact, both "kinds" of gardener—"homesick" and "native," to use these rather unsatisfactory classifications—at the same time, and the intertwined nature of this response should be emphasised, rather than elided.

Cerwonka's observations about the native gardening movement underscore the ways in which this garden style "functioned as a means through which people defined their national identity, responded to British imperialism, and redefined their relationship to Aboriginal people" (103). Her argument that native gardens allow white Australians to re-classify themselves as "stewards of the unique Australian environment," rather than colonizers, is particularly effective (122). Equally perceptive is her suggestion that the discourse about native vegetation enables non-indigenous Australians to ascribe for themselves a "new, indigenous identity" (132). However, her story of native gardening is a little too fixated on the Britain-Australia binary as a mode of analysing crises in, and reconstructions of, Australian identities. The assumption seems to be that the negotiation, through native gardening, of what it means to be "Australian" is made almost exclusively in reference to Britain and British identities; she refers, for example, to the republican movement, the 1970s Whitlam-inspired questioning of Australia's relationship to Britain, and the rejection of European trees for planting in Swanston Street in Melbourne. This paradigm leaves her little room to analyse the ways in which the discourse surrounding native gardens and gardening in Australia relates to anxieties about national identity precipitated by the presence of non-white migrants within the national borders (although she does address this idea in relation to police practices in her later chapter on Fitzroy). I would suggest that the strident language used by some proponents of the native garden has as much to do with nationalist anxieties, especially about the ethnic composition of the nation, as it does with re-defining the Australian self against a British identity. Cerwonka's own exposure of the environmentalist idea that native gardening is about what is "'meant' to be" (111) in Australia hints at this conflation of the management of garden and national space (see Hage, *White Nation*). Consider the similarities between her observation that "[m]any of the activities in which people engaged to redeem native vegetation . . . allowed people a forum to articulate and actively delineate what belongs in Australia and what does not" (108), and Ghassan Hage's characterization of the conviction of white Australians that "they were . . . masters of national space, and that it was up to them to decide who stayed in and who ought to be kept out of that space" (*White Nation* 17). Cerwonka's argument

would have been enriched by reference to the similarities in logic and language between ecological warriors and Hage's national worriers, and through attention to political thought, evident in One Nation's Policy statement in which "an embattled environment becomes a metaphor for embattled Australianness. According to this logic, 'traditional' Aussies, like traditional flora and fauna, are being squeezed from their habitats by feral intruders" (Thomas 27).

The concept of "discipline" comes to the fore in the final two chapters, which analyse policing techniques and attitudes in Fitzroy in inner Melbourne. Drawing primarily upon the work of Michel Foucault and Michekl de Certeau, Cerwonka argues that the police, through technology and narration, map out a terrain in which deviance is both located and anticipated. She posits that these spatial practices "are best read as more spontaneous responses to the threat of deterritorialization by Aboriginal and Asian groups in particular" (154). One of the strengths of this work is its focus on urban Aboriginality, and its relation to Aboriginal understandings of space, and resistance to hegemonic spatial practices. In choosing such a focus Cerwonka refutes "the essentialist position that authentic Aboriginality is always prior or distant: away in the past or away on the frontier" (Byrne 171). Her treatment of police attitudes to Asian migrants living in Fitzroy, while usefully drawing attention to the synergy between perceptions of what is inside the national borders and what is beyond, is less satisfying. Perhaps this is because Australian readers (obviously not intended as the core audience for this book, given its use of parenthetic "translations" of vernacular terms) are aware of a shift of focus that has taken place in nationalist anxieties—from Asian migrants (though, they too, are still subjected to vilification and violence as a consequence of their "difference") to Muslims from the Middle East (see Hage, *Against Paranoid Nationalism* ix). Readers are left with the feeling that Cerwonka's analysis could have been updated to accommodate more recent international events. As Hage points out, the idea of the "enemy within" as a result of migration has had great purchase in the post-September 11 political environment in the west ("Postscript" 243), and it is difficult to avoid this when discussing cultural anxieties about the occupation of national space.

Cerwonka's topic is ambitious and sometimes unwieldy, but *Native to the Nation* is written with discernment, and makes a significant contribution to the body of work on spatial practice. At the risk of invoking the hegemony of taste (which Cerwonka exposes in the first chapter), if readers can set aside the aesthetic reservations triggered by the sight of the repulsive fluorescent orange cover of the volume, their time will be well rewarded by this thought-provoking book.

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Carmel Bird, *Cape Grimm*. Sydney: Flamingo (HarperCollins), 2004, 305 pp.
AU$29.95
ISBN: 0-732-26992-X

Cape Grimm is Carmel Bird's latest novel, the third in an ambitious project known as *The Mandala Trilogy*, which the author plans to convert into a quartet with the novel she is currently working on (*Green Language*). Although freely bound up together, the pieces of this trilogy—*White Garden* (1995), *Red Shoes* (1998), and *Cape Grimm* (2004)—share some characters, and their principal connection is the concept of charisma that, when combined with evil, can cause extreme damage such as mass murder. Thus in *White Garden* Ambrose Goddard, the psychiatrist founder of the Mandala Clinic for the Mentally Ill in Melbourne (hence the title of the trilogy) virtually imprisons his patients and lets them die under the treatment of the Deep Sleep Therapy; in *Red Shoes* Petra Penfold-Knight leads a religious cult that plans to develop a new race of pure people by drugging them and ruining their lives; and in *Cape Grimm* the youthful charismatic leader of a religious community in Tasmania, Caleb Mean, ends up incinerating his people.

Although set in Tasmania, *Cape Grimm* is the complex and riveting narrative of a dark chapter of humanity that is becoming more and more conspicuous, one in which personal and collective stories, past and present, intertwine. Fiction and fact

are exquisitely mixed by the writer. Talking about her trilogy, Bird remarks: "Although the heart of these three novels is located in an imaginary Tasmania, all three, as well as looking inward, look outward to the state of the world" (Walker, "Conversations" 277). This imaginary Tasmania, portrayed in the novel at the time when it was called Van Diemen's Land (before 1856), is part of a careful selection of the setting to make it fit into the fairytale resonances that underlie *Cape Grimm*. On the one hand, the southwestern wilderness of Tasmania is called "Transylvania": it is "the mythic qualities merging naturally with the landscape of Tasmania. For in this place are mysterious and impenetrable swarthy forests, woods of deep and black-green shadows where demons lurk and angels hover nervously" (Bird, *Cape Grimm* 2). On the other hand, the place where the religious community of Skye is founded is in real life called Cape Grim, to which Bird has added a final "m" to make explicit the connection with the Brothers Grimm's stories that haunt the novel.

The central image is that of *El Niño*, which dominates the novel in its two main facets. First, *El Niño* is the Spanish name for the holy child Jesus and his image as a pilgrim. The Prayer of *El Niño de Atocha* is offered to the reader, this being one of the Mean family's treasured possessions, which explains the identification of the charismatic leader Caleb with a boy prophet, even though he turns out to be an Anti-Christ figure. Second, *El Niño* refers to a global climactic effect first registered in Peru and named by Camilo Carrillo in 1898, like the storm that provokes the shipwreck that unleashes the narrative in *Cape Grimm*.

There are three main stories that take place at different historical times but cyclically intersect in the novel, constantly calling attention to the repetition of cycles and to the fact that, as Bird herself testifies, the rise of charismatic people and its effects is cyclical, like seasons and the *El Niño* effect (Walker, "All the Way" 274–75). The protagonists of these stories are the members of the Mean family through different generations: their origins, their development into a religious community, and their fall, with an eye to a future comeback through the girl Golden. *Cape Grimm* is set in motion by the first story of the *Iris* shipwreck in Bass Strait due to an *El Niño* effect in 1841. This tragedy joins the lives of its only survivors, Minerva Carrillo and Magnus Mean, who manage to arrive at Puddingston Island where they find out that a child has also been saved. Minerva calls her Niña, the female counterpart to the pervasive image of the Baby Jesus. Minerva and Magnus get married in 1852, eventually forming a family of three children and the religious community at Skye, in Cape Grimm, where the evil and charismatic leader Caleb Mean will be born.

The second story starts more than a century later, when Caleb is born in 1959. This charismatic child becomes known as *El Niño*. On 5 February 1992, the day of his

thirty-third birthday (the symbolism of Christ again), Caleb drugs and incinerates the community of Sky, while only three survivors (himself, his partner Virginia and their daughter, Golden) have to jump over the cliff to commune with the air and the water of the ocean. However, this plan fails when they are caught by the police. Caleb is imprisoned in the Black River Psychiatric Detention Facility, while Virginia and Golden are taken to a hospital/prison. After changing their names for security reasons, a priest takes them to a secret house in the Tasmanian wilderness with a doctor and his wife. Speechless since the conflagration, Virginia starts to have visions of a dead girl, and it is here that the third story begins.

Beyond the personal accounts of the Mean family, this third story broadens its scope to narrate the silenced narrative of Van Diemen's Land's history. Captivated by the alleged invisibility but undeniable effect of marginal discourses, Bird combines her choice of the fairytale with the silenced chronicle of abused Tasmanian Aborigines. Through the ghost of a black dead girl, Mannaginna, Virginia witnesses the 1820s massacres of Tasmanian Aborigines under the hands of white European whalers, sealers, soldiers and farmers. While there had been only one "white-official" record of this mass slaughter, Virginia becomes the "unofficial" key to understanding the real exploitation of natives, even when her credibility remains doubtful for being the mute cover of a mass murderer and a ghost visionary. She is asked, "But how can you prove this to other people?" Her answer seems to express Bird's concern with the strength of marginal discourses: "If nobody believes this, it makes no difference. It is true" (193–94). After all, this is what Bird does in her novels: she departs from facts, but the result is a self-sufficient microcosm that, like Virginia's "own phantom world of truth," remains "untroubled by the marketplace of history-making and media limelight" (194). Thus, through Mannaginna's personal story, Bird offers an alternative view to Van Diemen's Land's history, a dark side which becomes universal with the references in the first chapters to the dark condition of the whole world.

The catalyst figure who links the three stories is Paul Van Loon, a central character as well as the narrator, who fits into the second story but is like a god-figure joining the narratives. Born the same year as Caleb, Paul was always fascinated by the boy prophet, until fate rewards him with a post as a psychiatrist in Black River, where he studies Caleb's case. Like the romantic bard who writes from his ivory tower, Paul is the visionary Rapunzel-like artist who writes from the white turret in Black River, with a privileged view to the secrets of the mind. An outsider descended from Dutch immigrants, he becomes the perfect vehicle to narrate and participate in a story of supernatural and covert meanings. His obsession with Caleb almost turns him into his alter ego, so that Paul ends up having access to Virginia's secret chronicles and ultimately marrying her. It is interesting to dis-

cover that, as Bird stated in an interview, Paul did not exist in the initial plan of the novel, although he gained ground progressively until he dominated the narrative completely (Walker, "Conversations" 284). Even when Paul reproduces Virginia's chronicles, the reader knows that he has manipulated them, and we cannot know what he has altered or left out. However, as Bird explains, "Paul thinks he can control the narrative, can tell the reader how to read, and yet there is a real pull away from him, signified at the end of the narrative proper by the eerie nature of Golden Mean. The story, if you like, has galloped away from the storyteller" (284). While Paul reassures himself in the control of his own narrative, at the end of the novel Golden is chosen as her father's successor. With a smile on her face, she foreshadows "the end of the world," and Paul echoes her words, as if under this charismatic girl's spell, losing the control he previously had.

Talking about the common factor to the novels of the *Mandala Trilogy*, Bird makes reference to a special type of alchemy, similar to her well-known statement that the "grub of fact" becomes the "butterfly of fiction" ("Fact" 159):

> Within the three there is an exploration of the notion of alchemy. One of the basic ideas of alchemy—the notion of gold being made from dross—is a most interesting one. It reflects, I think, one of the ways in which fiction is constructed, in that the writer takes the muddy fertile material of history and life, of the everyday and science, and transforms those elements into the flowers of the narrative. . . . Alchemy sets that up in a formal and chemical and mystical framework with the crucible and the ultimate creation, gold. (Walker, "Conversations" 278)

This alchemical metaphor is most conspicuous in *Cape Grimm*, where the titles of the chapters make reference to essential elements in the creation of life (Air, Fire, Water, Earth, or Dust), and the final result is "Gold" (the title of Chapter Ten and the name of Caleb's daughter, who ultimately grasps the key of the narrative). The novel is divided into twenty-four chapters, like the twenty-four hours of a day, making reference to Bird's constant preoccupation with the dichotomy "historical time"/"cyclical time." While the twenty-four hours and chapters indicate the different historical stages of the Mean family, the end of the novel, and of the metaphorical day its chapters represent, anticipates the beginning of another day, very similar to the one we have experienced, if only lived by another charismatic leader, Golden. The cyclical structure of the novel is undeniable. The first chapter "Dust," with apocalyptic undertones, displays the meteorological and moral decay of humanity, while the last chapter finishes with a reference to "the end of the world," a combination of universal, biblical and local references that is reminiscent of works like Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*.

This double notion of time is further developed in an appendix, "Time and Tide." The section on "Time" comprises a chronology starting in BC 1500 and ending in the present time. It is a chronological listing of previous and simultaneous events, "a tuning fork that," as Paul Van Loon declares, "hums and riffles back into the narrative" (247). The compiled events are a mixture of factual and fictional episodes from which the novel has been nourished. Many of these references are amplified in the section of "Tide," which elaborates on the fairytales, characters, and events that dominate the narrative, organized in alphabetical order. Although the section on "Time" is fundamental, the emphasis is on "Tide," since these tales echo back randomly into the narrative, as cyclically and repetitively as the connection of the stories narrated in *Cape Grimm*. The author uses the image of the moonbird, which, in a figure eight, follows the path of the whole Pacific Ocean, from north to south and back again. This movement is as cyclical as the connection of the stories, and the figure eight in a horizontal form means *ad infinitum*, signifying a cyclical and eternal return of charismatic and evil characters.

Cape Grimm leaves us with much to think about in regard to art, atrocity, memory, and the fragile line that can separate madness and marginality from an alternative and probably more acceptable truth than the one we are forced to believe. In a true postmodern vein, it presents all narratives as equally worthy of attention. Although Paul initially aligns himself with the objective point of view of Tasmanian history, he gradually gives in to Virginia's supernatural visions and the unavoidable and unexplainable impact of fairytales in his life. Bird sets the question of the origin and end of narratives: "Where in the world do stories begin? They begin, I believe, in the air, and in the waters of the ocean, in the rocks" (183–84). These origins are vague, as vague as the elements that combine in the alchemical process to produce the gold or the butterfly of fiction. For the end, however, she provides no answer (174). Probably because they never end. Like the moonbird, they cyclically feed on one another, coming up with familiar patterns that shine as if brand new, like Golden and like *The Green Language* that we are eagerly waiting to read.

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Terri Janke, *Butterfly Song*. Ringwood, Vic.: Penguin, 2005, 348 pp. AU$22.95
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With the publication of her short story "Brave and Free" in *Stories Without End*, Terri Janke signalled that, in addition to being a successful lawyer, businesswoman and mother, she was also a writer. Now with the release of her first novel, *Butterfly Song*, she has confirmed her place amongst a diverse and exciting group of third-generation Indigenous fiction writers, a group which includes writers such as Anita Heiss, Larissa Berendt, Kim Scott, Jennifer Martinello, Alexis Wright, Melissa Lucashenko, Jared Thomas and Wesley Enoch. And of course the list goes on. The beautiful, evocative cover of *Butterfly Song* promotes the novel as a "story of love set in Australia's tropical north, where the past is full of secrets." It is so much more. With a lightness of touch, Janke offers a love story that is also a personal, family and cultural history. The narrative ranges over space and time, moving from the Torres Strait in the 1940s to a Sydney courtroom in 1993, with multiple diversions in between.

Butterfly Song is narrated largely by Tarena, an Indigenous woman who has just finished her final law exams in Sydney. Despite some reservations, she agrees to accompany her mother to a tombstone unveiling on Thursday Island, and so begins her journey back to the past. Though Tarena has never been to Thursday Island her journey is one of return, a return to times and places not only of her childhood and adolescence, but also to those of her parents and grandparents. At the dramatic centre of the narrative is a court case Tarena is asked to conduct in Cairns. An antique brooch of a butterfly carved from a rare type of pearl shell is to be auctioned by a jewellery house with a reserve price of around $15,000. The brooch is part of the estate of the late Dr Nash—a collector of items of antiquity and once the chief doctor at the Cairns Base Hospital—but according to Tarena's mother Lily, and her Uncle Tally, the brooch belonged to their mother Francesca. They last saw it when Tally placed it in his dying mother's hands as the ambulance arrived to take her to hospital.

While Tarena begins a relationship with the lovely muso Sam, the real romance of *Butterfly Song* is the story of her grandparents' courtship and marriage. Some readers may find moments of this romance a little sentimental, but Kit's and Francesca's story is also a narrative of racial discrimination, restricted employment opportunities, dangerous working conditions and grossly inadequate health care which results in their easily preventable, premature deaths. It is a story in which the devoutly-Catholic, widowed Francesca struggles for five years to keep her family together. She bears with dignity the monthly visits and interrogations from Mr Woods, the "funny little man" (230) who has the power to take her children away.

The legal machinations, the insecurities and the seemingly insurmountable hurdles which face the inexperienced Tarena as she hurtles towards her first court appearance make this novel a page-turner, but the real power of the narrative comes from Janke's deft facility with language—her use of irony, understatement and repetition—and from the fragmentary structure of the narrative which allows for the interweaving of personal and national stories. Tarena begins her career as a law student in 1988, the Bicentenary year, and concludes it at the end of 1992, five months after the High Court delivered the historic *Mabo* judgement. The significance of both events for Indigenous peoples, and particularly for Indigenous law students, is narrated, in part, through the conversations in the University's Aboriginal Students Centre. On her arrival the somewhat naïve Tarena is told: "Hundreds of us marched to Mrs Macquarie's Chair at the Domain to protest the bicentenary . . . we've got to keep up the resistance. It's good to see more of you younger people coming to university. You can really make a difference." She thinks: "I'm not sure what difference I can make, but I don't tell her that. I smile and nod my head" (27). In the next moment, the older, more-experienced Jessie arrives fuming over the lecture on property law: "Carlson's still going through the *terra nullius* doctrine. Still telling everyone that blackfellas weren't here when Captain Cook got here. The whole law's fucked. It's based on a lie. What am I doing here?" (28). That same question plagues, and almost defeats, Tarena for the duration of her studies: "I look around the room. I'm the only black person in this class. What does that say about our legal system?" (68).

At this moment in the narrative Tarena tells of her experience as a waitress in Serge's Italian restaurant. The passage is worth quoting in full because it demonstrates the way in which Janke subtly, yet powerfully, writes the painful and intrusive moments her character suffers:

> I don't think the men on table nine need anything more to drink. I open another bottle of chianti, their fourth. . . . I stop pouring when the glass is half filled.
>
> "Keep going," they say. . . . "We've just been debating where you come from," says the guy with the striped tie.
>
> "I say Sri Lanka," says the second man.
>
> "No, I said Bali."
>
> "I was born in north Queensland," I explain. People are always thinking I come from other lands. Someplace exotic like India, Brazil, Zimbabwe.
>
> "Yes, but we mean what country do you come from?"
>
> "Will somebody take this garlic bread?" Serge bellows in the kitchen.
>
> A woman and two men on table twelve stop me as I serve the

> tortellini.
>
> "You must be new?" says the woman, who has red lips and matching blouse. "You look exotic, those almond eyes."
>
> "Are you married?" asks one of the men.
>
> "No, I'm Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal," I say.
>
> They laugh. "No, he meant are you married? He wanted to ask you out."
>
> "Oh, I thought he said, Are you Maori?"
>
> The statue of the old man in the courtyard winks and the walls of the restaurant are like a mausoleum. There are marble faces and marble hearts at each of the tables. There is no joy serving the spiritless. (71)

The presumptuous, arrogant questioning of Tarena's identity is unceasing. She is called on repeatedly to explain her heritage to classmates, taxi-drivers, strangers in nightclubs, acquaintances, employers and customers. These repetitive questions, coupled with the intentional and unintentional racial slurs she endures, build to a point where the ("white") reader, unable ultimately to understand what it must be like to live with this kind of affront, is at least made aware of its persistent and destructive nature.

The day after her exams finish, a hungover and uncertain Tarena flies to Thursday Island:

> I'm wearing the black dress I bought from a boutique in Oxford Street. The dark sunglasses match my black strappy heels. Deliberately I have dressed to show everyone that I am cool, that I have made it. But really I feel like the eleven-year-old who left many years ago. (12)

At the novel's conclusion she has learnt many things, about her family and, importantly, about herself. She has one further indignity to face; attending court to represent a client and being mistaken for the defendant in a petty criminal case. The insecure, frightened girl resists the urge to "vomit and scream" and run away, and stands instead to announce: "Your worship, I am a lawyer" (291). Tarena has not quite "made it" yet, but she is certainly on the way. It would be wonderful to meet her again and I sincerely hope Janke revisits this character in her future writing. As a writer, Terri Janke has made it. *Butterfly Song* is a strong, lyrical first novel.

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